



Association of Bay Area Governments
Bay Area Air Quality Management District
Metropolitan Transportation Commission

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Joint Policy Committee / Regional Planning Program

Date: November 7, 2005

To: Joint Policy Committee

From: Regional Planning Program Director

Subject: JPC Membership

At its meeting of November 19th, 2004, after inviting the BAAQMD to join the Committee and increasing the size of the Committee from fourteen to twenty-one members, the JPC resolved:

THAT size and composition of the Joint Policy Committee be reviewed after one year.

This memo has been prepared to assist in that review.

The Government Code (amended by Senator Torlakson's 2004 SB 849) requires that the JPC have representatives of ABAG, BAAQMD, and MTC. There must also be at least one representative from each of the nine Bay Area counties. The law is silent on the total number of JPC members and their division among the three agencies. There is no requirement that ABAG, BAAQMD and MTC each have an equal number of members on the JPC, though both the philosophical and practical consequences of unequal representation could be difficult.

Committee size has implications for at least three qualities of committee operation:

1. *Representation:* With a larger membership, the JPC is likely to be more representative of the Bay Area's geographic and social diversity. More members will also be available to assist in outreach to areas with which they are familiar and in which they are known.
2. *Discussion:* The quality of discussion is generally better in a smaller committee. Members have more time to explore ideas in depth and respond to one another.
3. *Quorum:* The larger committee, the more members there are to draw upon to achieve a quorum. However, there may be a disincentive to attend in the belief that there are plenty of others available to compensate for the non-attendance of one member. If enough people believe their attendance is not required, then a quorum may be more difficult to achieve. It may be possible to work around this disincentive by establishing the quorum requirement at something less than the usual fifty-percent plus one, but this could magnify representational anomalies and render some JPC decisions practically and politically suspect—even though they would meet a legal test.

As the JPC is required to have at least one representative from each of the Bay Area counties, the minimum Committee size is nine members. The table below identifies this and other possible

sizes, assuming continuing equal representation from each of the three member agencies. Quorum sizes, using the usual (but not required) fifty percent plus one standard, are also listed.

| Agency Representatives | Total JPC Membership | Quorum (50% + 1) |
|---------------------------|-------------------------|---------------------|
| 3 | 9 | 5 |
| 4 | 12 | 7 |
| 5 | 15 | 8 |
| 6 | 18 | 10 |
| 7 | 21 | 11 |
| 8 | 24 | 13 |
| 9 | 27 | 14 |
| 10 | 30 | 16 |

Regardless of Committee size, there will likely be a requirement that all potential members be vetted jointly by a committee of the chief elected officers (i.e., Chairs and President) of the three member agencies to ensure representation from all nine counties. Once required representation is ensured, then each official would recommend members to his or her respective board or commission.

Last November, the JPC also resolved:

THAT the Committee chair rotate among member agencies, the chair or president of each agency serving a one-year term as chair of the JPC, in this order: ABAG, MTC, BAAQMD.

This assumes—and requires—that the chief elected officer of each agency be a member of the JPC. The resolution is also silent on who chairs in the absence of the regular chairperson. In the process of considering its composition and membership, the JPC may also want to revisit this resolution.

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION:

- A. How many members from each agency should be on the JPC?
- B. What should constitute a quorum?
- C. How should the chair (and vice chair?) be selected and how long should s/he serve?



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